

Appl. No. : 10/686,957
Filed : October 15, 2003

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed April 6, 2004. Claims 1-8 are pending.

By the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over IGT Player Choice Drop-In Bar. While Applicant's copy of this reference is poor, it appears to Applicant that the Examiner's assertion that the reference shows a gaming machine with a bill acceptor positioned beyond a lockable door, is correct. Applicant asserts, however, that Applicant's invention is distinguishable from this reference.

In the IGT arrangement, as best understood, a currency acceptor is located in a space beneath a lockable door. By unlocking the door, the door can be swung open to gain access to the currency acceptor. In this configuration, security of the currency acceptor is governed by the state of the lock associated with the covering door.

Applicant's claimed invention differs from this arrangement quite substantially. In accordance with the invention as claimed in Claim 1, a currency container is located in a housing of a gaming machine. In addition, locking mechanism is mounted to the housing. The locking mechanism includes a cam rotatable between a first unlocking position and a second locking position by engagement of a key with a lock body of the locking mechanism from an exterior of said housing, the cam adapted in its locking position to engage a latching mechanism of the currency container to lock said currency container within said housing.

In this configuration, the currency container itself includes a latching mechanism for retaining the currency container to the housing. The locking mechanism selectively engages the latching mechanism of the currency container. In this configuration, it will be appreciated that the locking

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mechanism is not a simple door lock, but is configured to engage a latching mechanism associated with the currency container. This configuration is best illustrated in Figures 5A and 5B.

Applicant asserts that the IGT Player Choice Drop-In Bar reference does not teach a currency container having a latching mechanism, or a locking mechanism mounted to the housing which is configured to selectively engage such a latching mechanism. As such, Applicant asserts that Claim 1 is allowable over this reference.

The Examiner rejected Claims 2-8 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over IGT Player Choice Drop-In Bar in view of Halic (USPN 5,700,195). The Examiner asserts that Halic teaches a lockable validator, and locating the validator within the bounds of another lockable door. Applicant asserts that Claims 2-8 are allowable over these references.

As indicated, the IGT reference teaches only providing a lockable currency container access door. Halic discloses that an inner door may be locked over the currency container itself.

Again, Applicant notes that neither reference teaches or suggests the configuration as claimed in Claim 1 where a locking mechanism which is accessible from the outside of a gaming machine housing selectively engages a latching mechanism of a currency container. In Halic, various doors have their own locks, and an inner door is positioned over the currency container. However, no locking mechanisms which are accessible from outside the gaming machine engage a latching mechanism of the currency container.

Claim 2 is believed to be allowable for the reason that it depends from Claim 1. In addition, however, Applicant asserts that the prior art does not disclose or suggest the arrangement in Claim 1 further including a lockable door as claimed in Claim 2.

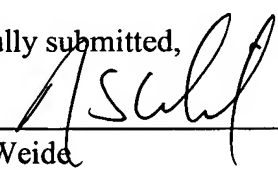
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Claim 3 is believed allowable over the prior art for similar reasons to Claim 1. Among other things, Claim 3 recites a currently container locking mechanism including a latch movable between a first position in which the currency container locking mechanism locks the currency container to a gaming machine housing, preventing its removal, and a second position permitting the currency container to be removed from the housing, and a secondary locking mechanism including a cam movable between a first position in which it engages the latch when the latch is in the first position, preventing the latch from being moved to its second position, and a second position in which the cam is spaced from the latch, permitting the latch to be moved to its second position.

Applicant asserts that the prior art does not teach or suggest providing a secondary locking mechanism which engages a latch of a locking mechanism of a currency container. As indicated above, the IGT and Halic references simply teach locks individually associated with doors, be they a main door or secondary or inner door. None of the locks are configured to selectively engage other locking mechanisms, including a latch of a currently container locking device.

Applicant asserts that Claims 4-8 are allowable for at least the reason they depend from Claim 3. If any matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

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Respectfully submitted,
By: 
R. Scott Weide
Registration No. 37,755
Weide & Miller, Ltd.
Bank West Building, 5th Floor
7251 West Lake Mead Blvd., Suite 530
Las Vegas, NV 89128
(702)-382-4804 (Pacific time)